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A Conversation with
Dr. Dana Spada
Founder of LEAF Psychotherapy

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The Therapist EVERYONE'S Talking About



A Conversation with Dr. Dana Spada, Founder of LEAF Psychotherapy

Tucked into the tranquil corners of Monmouth County, New Jersey, is a psychotherapy practice that's quietly redefining what it means to heal. With serene, beautifully designed spaces and an approach that blends clinical expertise with soulful connection, LEAF Psychotherapy is as much a sanctuary as it is a service.

We sat down with the passionate and magnetic founder of LEAF Psychotherapy, Dr. Dana Spada, to talk about the heart behind her work, what makes therapy effective, and why clients walk away from her practice feeling seen, refreshed, and laughing more than they expected.

Q: What is LEAF Psychotherapy?

Dr. Dana Spada: LEAF Psychotherapy is a holistic, boutique private therapy practice. We're 100% tailored to the individual, meaning there's nothing cookie-cutter about what we do. We operate as a concierge practice—our services are highly personalized and grounded in deep, clinical care. We have four beautiful locations in Colts Neck, Little Silver, Sea Girt and Hazlet and we offer both in-person and virtual sessions. That said, we always encourage in-person whenever possible—our offices are incredibly calming and Zen. We work with children, teens, adults, couples, and families across a wide range of therapy modalities, including individual and marriage counseling.

Q: What makes the practice stand out?

DS: What truly sets us apart is the individualized nature of our care. Because we are out-of-network and do not accept insurance, we aren't boxed into rigid frameworks or billing-driven sessions. This gives us the freedom to be creative, flexible, and deeply attuned to each client's unique needs.

Although we do not accept insurance, we offer a generous sliding scale and are flexible with pricing to help make therapy inclusive and accessible. We have an extremely talented, tight-knit clinical team



with a wide range of methodologies, so our clients receive care that feels curated just for them. From the very first phone call—which is always answered by an owner—we take our time to understand what a client is going through and pair them with the best-fit therapist. That initial care makes all the difference.

Q: What makes therapy effective in your eyes?

DS: The relationship between the therapist and the client is everything. It's the core vehicle for healing and growth. When a client feels truly seen, heard, and safe—something transformative happens. Trust is what allows people to open up.

I always say you should absolutely love your therapist. If you don't feel that way, it's probably not the right fit. Yes, insight matters—but the real magic happens when someone feels emotionally safe enough to actually feel through their experiences, not just think about them. Life is hard. We all need support

to process, make sense of things, and move through pain in a way that leads to real healing.

Q: How do you see people grow in therapy?

DS: The growth I witness is honestly beyond words. Every client I work with experiences some level of profound transformation—whether it's learning to prioritize themselves, cultivating inner peace, or understanding the deeper unconscious patterns that shape their behavior.

Some come in just looking to feel a little better and end up completely changing their lives. I always tell new clients, "There is no way you will not grow through this process." It's magical. Truly.

Q: Who should come to therapy?

DS: Anyone and everyone. Therapy isn't about being "sick" or broken. It's about deepening your understanding of yourself and improving your life. Anyone who wants to evolve, who wants

to experience more peace, clarity, or fulfillment—therapy is for them. And once you've experienced a great therapist-client relationship, most people can't imagine their life without it.

Q: What's your favorite kind of therapy to do?

DS: Marriage and couples therapy. It's also the hardest! Couples often come in with a lot of conflict, and they're wondering whose side the therapist will take. It creates a really charged dynamic. But that's what makes it so powerful.

I usually see couples together for the first session, then break them into individual sessions. Sometimes, we don't even return to joint sessions because the individual work is so impactful that it shifts the relationship entirely. It's incredibly rewarding, and always full of surprises.

Q: What's your style as a therapist?

DS: I'd describe my style as direct, grounded, and real. Clients often say it feels like talking to a best friend—one

who's going to tell you the truth and help you actually change your life. I say hard things in a way that's compassionate and receivable, and we don't waste time. People come in because they want to grow, and I meet them with that same urgency.

I also laugh a lot with my clients. Sessions are dynamic. We might cry, we might belly-laugh—it's all part of the healing process. I'm very down-to-earth, and I think my own openness gives clients permission to be open, too.

Q: Do you love being a therapist?

DS: I absolutely love it. It's my calling. I have the most incredible clients and the most meaningful relationships. I'm endlessly grateful that this is my work.

I grew up with a lot of psychology books in my house, and I've always been fascinated by human behavior. I also had my own struggles and did my own deep therapeutic work—which I believe every good therapist must do. That inner work makes all the difference. I know I'm doing exactly what I'm meant to be doing, and I feel lucky every day.

Getting to the heart of the matter

After spending time with Dr. Dana Spada, it's easy to understand why clients speak about her with such reverence—and often, relief. She radiates a kind of electric presence: high-energy, deeply compassionate, and tuned in. Her passion for the work is palpable, and so is her ability to connect, cut through the noise, and get right to the emotional heart of things.

Over and over, clients describe their experiences with words like life-changing, clarifying, and healing. One shared, "Dana was different. In literally three sessions, she got to the heart of the matter," while another wrote, "She makes you feel like you're her only client... the discovery and freedom that takes place with her is priceless."

A first-time therapy client reflected on how their work with Dr. Spada evolved into a journey of deeper self-awareness, saying, "With her guidance, I've been able to move toward the best version of myself." And one summed it up simply: "Dr. Spada has been a godsend for my entire family."

It's clear that therapy with Dr. Spada is not only effective—it's profound. Clients don't just feel heard, they feel deeply understood. They don't just show up for sessions, they leave transformed. And yes, they often leave laughing too.

